

OUR REAL FOOD JOURNEY



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Our real food journey started in January 2014 when a week of staying up until early hours of morning reading Paleo and Primal blogs and books made me realise that **everything I thought I knew about nutrition was wrong** or at least seriously mixed up. Almost overnight I changed from being a chronic cardio gym attendee on a typical low fat high protein diet to a cross-fitting “real foodie” eating high (healthy) fat and doing much less exercise for exercise’s sake. And **it literally changed my life within a couple of weeks.**

WHAT HAS EATING “REAL FOOD” MEANT FOR ME?

There have been many changes I’ve observed in my physical and mental health. But just to pick one that has made a huge impact: no longer am I stuck on a yo-yo dieting path of but instead enjoy delicious satiating foods all while maintaining a healthy body and mind. It’s not always easy – challenges arise as they do. But it is so so much easier and the **FREEDOM** I feel in comparison to the angst that used to accompany my past exercise/eating regimes is incredible. That’s when I realised **this was not a diet – but rather a new way of eating full stop.**

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE FAMILY?!

Immediately I knew that this was something that was not just good for me but would be important for our whole family. And then **I felt overwhelmed – where to start and how to get everyone on board?** It certainly isn’t always easy and every day there are new challenges. Probably the biggest of which is working through all the myths and that we are constantly being bombarded with. Starting with the infamous food pyramid. And then the fact that we are literally surrounded by processed “convenience” foods all day every day. Also, the fact is that (at least for now!) my husband remains somewhat sceptical and things are far from plain sailing when my teenage step-daughter visits. But notwithstanding this I remain convinced that **switching to a predominantly “real food” way of eating with a family is doable** and that the longer you do it the easier it gets!

BUT WHAT’S THE PRACTICAL REALITY – DON’T YOU CRAVE YOUR OLD

“TREATS”?

I'd say that me and Dom would eat Paleo / real food 90% of the time. And the 10% is not made up of junk. It's simply times when either for reasons of convenience, or to be inclusive in a social situation, we'll eat something less than ideal – like meat that's cooked in canola oil or gluten free bread. It's very rare now that I would eat something processed as a “treat” because there isn't anything I'm craving that's not “real food”. I think this is a great indication that **eating real food is NOT A DIET** because I just don't have a sense of it being temporary or a situation of deprivation.

WHAT ABOUT THE 80:20 RULE?

I take issue with those that think that not eating 80:20 (and even choosing not to eat rather than eat foods you prefer not to eat when out socially) automatically means that you have some kind of eating disorder. Why? Well, first, because **you genuinely may not wish to eat certain foods once you stop eating them. Just like some people never want drink or smoke once they quit.** It doesn't make a person obsessed or unbalanced if they choose not to eat cheap chocolate bars from the gas station or diet soda ever again!

If you love the foods you've chosen to eat, are getting the nourishment you need from them, aren't feeling deprived or craving other foods then why, **why must it be that you're weird if you don't want to go out of your way to “cheat” and eat 20% processed junk!** The thing is that the more you learn about what goes into most processed foods the more you're motivated to avoid them in a way that has nothing to do with their macro nutrient profile or calorie load. Also, when you don't eat foods with additives/preservatives and especially when you avoid gluten for a long time then you tend to feel terrible when you do eat foods containing these things – so it's just not worth it!

Now, **that doesn't mean to say we don't do treats. We do treats.** Just that most of these “treats” tend to be something that in moderation would be fine but we may over indulge on occasion – like a “paleo-fied” dessert treat. And then sure there is the odd occasion we eat something that is hard to see has any redeeming features for it. But this will normally be for social situations/convenience rather than an outright decision to specifically eat that thing.

SOME OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT JUST EATING **REAL FOOD**:

1. Nutrient density – I've found that by eliminating grains and refined sugars, I end up eating a much larger variety of nutrient dense foods. I've always eaten lots of vegetables but for sure I consume a whole lot more these days.

2. Satiety – I never have to count calories or feel hungry. This is massive! By eating much more fat (as well as protein) I feel satiated for so much longer. A lot of times now I will only eat 2 or 3 meals a day. I don't get hungry between meals but I'm genuinely hungry at the meals I do eat. It's a great feeling not to be craving foods and then to eat when you really are hungry.

3. My energy levels are so much more consistent throughout the day. I find myself waking up without an alarm clock at the same time each morning. I feel as though a hazy feeling has lifted from me – it's not like I ever really thought about this before I started to eat real food and ditch processed foods but now I look back it's a very real change.

4. I just don't get bloated. For so many years I've just taken bouts of bloated stomach (e.g. mild or more severe) during the month for granted as though it was something that was inevitable. Now nothing. No bloating. To me this is a huge deal and makes me feel so so much better.

So there you have it – an overview of our food journey so far. Thank you for catching up with us and I looking forward to having you join us to share your own real food journey and to enjoy the support of our Dom's Kitchen community. If this sounds like you then we'd love for you to join us in

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